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METRO EAST - POLLUTION



Metro East: demolition of former Chemetco copper smelter moves forward

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<http://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/kwmu/files/201109/DSCN2861.JPG>

Removing one of the large manifolds from the roof of the [Image 1 of 2 \(javascript:void\(0\)\)](#) foundry building at the former Chemetco secondary copper smelter.

(Photo courtesy of Illinois EPA)

http://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/kwmu/files/201109/Aerial_view_USEPA.jpg

Demolition of the former [Chemetco copper smelter](#)

<http://maps.google.com/maps/ms?msid=20246789842252535363.0004acd7747bbb5a8089f&msa=0&ll=38.79782,-90.098222&spn=0.006338,0.009645>

took another step forward on Tuesday. The demolition is the start of a long clean-up process for the hazardous Metro East eyesore.

[The Illinois EPA](#) (<http://www.epa.state.il.us/environmental-progress/v26/n4/sealed-smelter.html>) is overseeing the dismantling of the smelter buildings, which began last year.

IEPA regional director Chris Cahnovsky says the large manifolds on top of the foundry building have now been removed.

"These manifolds give this building its very distinctive, ominous look, so when these manifolds come down, you're going to see a drastic change in the visual appearance of the site," Cahnovsky said.

Cahnovsky says the building will be completely dismantled by the end of November.

The Chemetco plant had a [history of environmental violations](#) (<http://www.epa.gov/Region5/cleanup/chemetco/>). It closed down and [filed for bankruptcy](#) (<http://www.chemetcoestate.com/>) in 2001.

The property is contaminated with more than 500,000 cubic yards of smelter waste containing high levels of cadmium, copper, and lead.